

# MULTIMODALITY IN LINGUISTIC RESEARCH

Workshop series at the Department of English and American Studies

6 June 2017

Campus Neues Palais | building 11 | room 2.19

**CLAUDIA GIANELLI** University of Potsdam

*"I grasp what you give": Neurophysiological evidence on the interplay between action language and perspective taking*

Our everyday experience of acting and talking about actions is inherently related to our ability to take and give perspective in a real or described space of action that is very often shared with other human beings. The aim of my talk is to present recent kinematics and neurophysiological investigations, focusing on the interplay of linguistic and spatial perspective. This review will show how the relationship between these two perspectives is neither obvious nor immediate especially when putting them in a social context. The methodological and theoretical implications will also be discussed.

**EVE SWEETSER** University of California, Berkeley

*Gesture, conditional constructions, TV data, and multiple deictic viewpoints*

Gesture accompanying conditional IF-constructions represents the speaker's viewpoint in numerous ways: it can trace the speaker's reasoning process through multiple states (forwards or sideways), or weigh alternatives (between the two hands) in the mental "landscape." But simultaneously, superimposed on this, the deictic structure of interaction is enacted too. This is particularly obvious in television talk show and news data, where on-screen interlocutors compete with each other and with the camera (and the eventual viewers) as the speaker's addressees, causing multiple deictic coordinates. A speaker may simultaneously engage the audience and the interviewer, for example, by keeping his/her body turned towards the audience while the head is turned towards the interviewer. Thus, a speech-act conditional might be gesturally "presented" to the audience, while spoken to (and with the head facing) an interviewer. Hands, body orientation and gaze are physically significantly independent, and can thus be deployed to maintain multiple Speaker-Addressee relations simultaneously.

Looking at talk-show and news data from the UCLA television database, I will examine some of the multiplicity of deictic viewpoints which emerge.

**MAIRA AVELAR MIRANDA** Universidade Estadual do Sudoeste de Bahia, Brazil

*On deixis: a verbo-gestural analysis*

In this talk, we will present a discussion about multimodal deixis, focusing on gestural analysis. Taking into consideration Bressemer and collaborators' (2013) parameters for gestural analysis in multimodal corpora, we will discuss some data related to locative deixis in Brazilian Portuguese corpora, comprising videos from the Distributed Little Red Hen Lab (co-directed by Mark Turner and Francis Steen) database for Brazilian Portuguese and some other illustrative video corpora. We will discuss some comparative results about the locatives "aqui" (here) and "lá" (there), taking into consideration: a) prototypical gestures used with these deictics that occur with a concrete referent (Avelar & Ferrari, 2017), and b) non-prototypical uses that occur with abstract referents, interpreted as metaphoric or discursive occurrences (Avelar & Passos, in press).

Avelar, M. & Ferrari, L. (2017). Integração experiencial e dêixis locativa: o papel discursivo dos gestos. *Cadernos de Estudos Linguísticos*. v.59, n.1., p. 73-89

Avelar, M. & Passos, H. (in press). Uma análise cognitiva do dêitico aqui em dados orais e multimodais. *Revista Signo* v. 42 n. 74.

Bressemer, J. et al. (2013). Linguistic annotation system for gestures. In: Müller, C. et al (Eds). *Body – Language – Communication: an International Handbook on Multimodality in Human Interaction*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, p. 1099-1124.

In the workshop, we will discuss theoretical and methodological questions concerning the scope and potential of multimodal approaches in linguistic research. For attending the talks, a quick (but binding) registration via e-mail until 29 May is required. Please write to Milene Mendes de Oliveira (mendesde@uni-potsdam.de) or Anna Finzel (finzel@uni-potsdam.de) and inform your full name, affiliation, and the talk(s) you intend to attend.

## Program:

11.15-12.45: Claudia Gianelli  
12.45-14.00: Lunch break  
14.00-15.30: Eve Sweetser  
15.30-16.00: Coffee break  
16.00-17.30: Maira Avelar Miranda  
17.30-18.00: Discussion